

The Middletown Transcript.

VOL. XIV.

MIDDLETOWN, DELAWARE, FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JULY 1, 1881.

NO. 27.

BROWNINGS' ITEMS OF INTEREST.

That BROWNINGS' Clothing is the Cheapest and Best in Philadelphia.
That Every Garment sold is guaranteed to the purchaser.
That We are by far the Largest Makers of Ready-Made Clothing in the United States.
That We have competent men of long and tried experience in every department, so that goods bearing our trade-mark will stand the test of comparison.
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That Our principle of business is to give full satisfaction and full value, or money refunded.
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That The best Goods, honestly made, cut and trimmed, are the only stock we have for sale.
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That We invite the people to come and examine our Splendid Stock of READY-MADE CLOTHING for the SPRING SEASON.

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Pure Wines and Liquors for Medicinal Purposes.

WINDOW GLASS, PUTTY, &c.

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A full line of all the Popular Patent Medicines of the day constantly on hand.

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THIS PATRONAGE OF THE MERCHANTS of the Peninsula is solicited by the above old-established and favorably known firm. Jan 5-4f

THE BIBLE A LITERARY BOOK.

[Read by Rev. W. L. S. Murray, before Irving Lyceum, of Middletown, Del.]

The Bible is often spoken of as an ancient book, a mysterious book and a sacred book, but rarely as a literary book.

The Bible is consulted by infidels for discrepancies, by the sorrowing for comfort, by the lost for salvation, by the christian for guidance, and the minister for examples of holy living. But how seldom is it examined for its literary merits. Many who are unacquainted with its beauty have presented it as a tasteless, inelegant, uninteresting work, heavy in its style and entirely wanting in rhetorical finish.

If critics represent this celestial garden, with its tree of knowledge hung with the finest fruits and flowers of literature, as a wilderness, it is our duty to set aside such a representation and our privilege to invite those of literary tastes to this "second Paradise," fair as the first and more secure, for where its fountains sparkle and its groves entwined their floral beauties there lurked the serpent to beguile.

But here no tempter lies in wait, no death-bearing tree presents its fruit. Sir Wm. Jones, the great master of oriental literature, has said: "I have regularly and attentively read The Holy Scriptures, and am of the opinion that this volume, independent of its divine origin, contains more sublimity and beauty, more pure morality, more independent history and finer strains of poetry and eloquence than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been composed."

To this might be added the opinion of Roscoe, the great infidel of France: "I will confess to you that the majesty of the scriptures strike me with admiration as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of all our philosophers, with all their pomp and diction, how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the scriptures."

See how this infidel admires the majesty of the scriptures and the purity of the Gospels. But it is the very struggle of the noble Othello.

"His heart rebels but his hand is firm. He kisses the beautiful maiden before he would destroy her."

We find literary excellence in Bible histories. Strange place to look for it, say some. We feel sure the noted "Bob" would think so, from his idea of Moses. Instead of seeing this valley of dry bones clothed with flesh and standing upon an exceeding great army he would expect to see something like Irving's Icabod Crane, "who was tall but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangle a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his night frame most loosely hung together. His head was small and flat at the top, with large ears and a snipe nose, so that it looked like a weathercock perched on his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scare-crowd eloped from a corn field."

Read the histories of the Bible. You will neither find a valley of dry bones nor an Icabod Crane. For the historians have breathed upon the dry bones. They live an exceeding great army. While we read, the world's "gray fathers" pass before us, and among them we behold, the Poet, the Prophet, the Priest, the Politician, the Prince and the Courtier.

There is an awful grandeur around these men. They live in the presence of God and depart into the unknown to be forever with the Lord.

Compare the Bible history of creation with that of the Koran. Mohammed says: "God created the earth in two days and he placed in the earth mountains, firmly rooted, rising above the same; and he blessed it and provided therein food of the creatures designed to be the inhabitants thereof in four days. Then he set his mind to the creation of the heavens; and it was smoke, and he said unto it and unto the earth, come either obediently or against your will. They answered, we come." How different from those stately steepings of the historian in Genesis. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

The Bible contains the oldest history in the world and at the same time the most modern. It reaches back to the beginning and forward to the ending. It describes what took place on the first day and declares what will come to pass on the last day.

We behold also literary excellence in this wonderful book. In the pen pictures it places before us of the Holy Land and its inhabitants. We are compelled to acknowledge that the "Hebrew Bard" have made the land of Palestine, in its geographical features, remarkable localities and inhabitants, much more familiar to the stranger than the "Grecian Bard" have the isles of the Egean. There is one pen picture which at this time deserves special notice. It is the courtship of Isaac and Rebekah—Isaac was about to become an old bachelor. His father was opposed to it. So Abraham said, "I will choose a wife for my son." (Not the last father who has assumed the right to choose for his son.) He called his servant. They concluded that marriages were made in heaven, not in fine parlors, in elegant coaches, moonlight walks, nor even by hanging

over the front gate. The old man also concluded it would be of no use to send Isaac to look for a wife and he thought he would just fix up the servant and give him the rings and presents and let him go and do the courting for Isaac. The servant went, found the maiden, gave her the presents, went home with her from the well and talked to her parents, especially to her big brother. Every one who has had any experience with big brothers knows that it is a great deal more difficult to court them than either the parents or the young lady. But the servant proved himself equal to the task; for he so managed the whole affair that in a short time the young lady was willing to mount a camel, leave father, mother and big brother all behind and take with the servant a ride of nearly a thousand miles.

Now the wonder to me has been, as the servant had to do all the courting and the giving of the presents and then take so long a ride with Rebekah, that it did not end like the courtship of Miles Standish, who gave as his reason for not courting for himself his utter inability to stand up against a woman's "No." Said he:

"I can march up to a fortress and summon the place to surrender. But march up to a woman with such a proposal I dare not. I am not afraid of bullets, nor shot from the mouth of a cannon. But of a thundering 'No,' point blank from the mouth of a woman, that I confess I'm afraid of; nor am I ashamed to confess it."

So the captain sent John. But when he popped the question for the captain the maiden said: "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" John was so thunderstruck that it took him some time to recover, but when he did, John spoke for himself, married the lady and left the captain to consider his maxim, must do it yourself; you must not leave it to others."

The difference between Isaac and young Americans is just this: Isaac believed others might court for him, but young Americans know if courting is to be done well they must do it themselves.

There are many things in the Bible of literary merit but my time is too short to dwell upon them or even name them. I will give a passing notice to the figures of the Bible simply to call attention to them. A poetical genius has remarked, "That not more thickly are the flowers and blades of grass beaded at early morn with dew drops, than are the sacred writings adorned with figures." He has also stated that there is not any considerable figure or trope recognized by grammarians of which examples may not be furnished in the scriptures.

There is also a poetical excellence in the Bible. But I dare not venture my own mean opinion while so many so noted for ability have spoken on this point. Sir Daniel Sanford says: "In Lyric flow, and fire, in crushing force, the poetry of the ancient scriptures is the most superb that ever burned in the breast of man." Some may think Sir Daniel extravagant, but read the words Milton puts into the mouth of Christ:

"That rather Greece from us their art derived, while they their longest sing The voices of their deities, and their own, in fable, hymn, or song, so personating Their gods, and deities, and themselves past shame. Remorse their swelling epithets, thick laid As marshes on a harlots cheek, the rest Thin sown with aught of profit or delight. Will be found unworthy to compare With Zion's songs."

There is a literature where all is as tender and beautiful as a summer's evening, but the damps of disease descend with the dews of heaven and the delicate and the sweet virtues of the exposure. We must avoid such. We must choose between the good and the evil with an eye purified as by fire. For if we choose by ornament alone we will most certainly find when time is lost, that "ornament is but the gilded shroud to a most dangerous sin."

If we choose that which appeals to our pride and pleads our merit we will discover that such was but the "seeming truth which cunning tries to put on to entrap the wisest."

These things are beautifully set forth in "The Merchant of Venice," where the suitors of Portia sought her hand and she placed before them the three caskets. The first chose the golden one, when he looked in with disappointed astonishment and exclaimed: "What have we here? A carrion death." Such will be the disappointment of all who choose trashy, fictitious literature, although it may look like "apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The second came and chose the silver casket and to his great surprise he found a blinking idiot. So will it be with all who choose infidel literature, for in it there is the blinking idiot—the fool who has said in his heart, there is no God."

The third Prince came, who would neither choose by ornament nor by merit, but that which required him to "give and hazard all that he possessed." When he examined his choice he found to his great delight the picture of Portia, who became his bride. There are greater joys for every one who would choose the leaden casket of Bible literature, which contains the picture of One fairer than Portia, even Jesus, the world's great Exemplar.

"The whisper of a beautiful woman," says Balzac, "can be heard further than the loudest call of duty." But the man, says an exchange, who is creeping up stairs with his boots off at two o'clock a. m., and hears the whisper of his wife as she leans over the banister in the darkness doesn't think of her beauty. His chief thought is how much he would like to exchange his boots for a pair of wings.—*Kitt Adams.*

THE HASTY MARRIAGE.

BY MARIETTA HOLLEY.

"Will you, Ethel? It is only for a moment. Will you give me the sweet right to call you wife?"

So Ethel, impulsive, generous-hearted, and kind, as she thought, by the strong links of gratitude and pity, knelt by the dying man, and the words were spoken that made her a wife. The minister, a friend of the sick man, left the room, and she still knelt there; for the weak clasp of his hands held her.

Ethel Arnold was an orphan, but she had felt but little of the usual friendlessness and loneliness of that state, so guarded and blest had her life been, by the love and care of this dying man. He had been her father's ward, and so trusted and beloved by Mr. Arnold, that he had left her and her large property in the care and guardianship of Paul Lindsey. From that time, as child, girl, and woman, she had always looked up to him, as her dearest friend—her brother.

But not as a lover. No! her lover—the ideal, coming man, who was to glorify her life—was not at all like Paul Lindsey. He did not have that pleasant, thoughtful face, those tender, gray eyes, nor these straightforward, manly, honest ways. No, he resembled more a corsair. He was to be brilliant, dashing, rather gloomy; with dark secrets in his life, burdens of gloom, and grief, and, perhaps, remorse, which her love was to lighten. And he was to have errors, picturesque sins, which her silent example was to purify. He was to be something between Byron's "Lara" and an Italian brigand.

Ethel had read a great many novels. He was not to be rich, like Paul, nor, like him, beloved by all classes, from the rich to the poor. No! she preferred a very poor man, so she could make a sacrifice of herself, and be bewailed over by mercenary friends. And she rather wished to have him persecuted and contemned by the world, so she could take him to her heart and crown him, saying, "though the herd have fled from thee, thy home is still here."

Yes, Ethel had read a great many novels. As for Paul, she had never thought of his being anything to her, only the truest and kindest of friends; one to be relied upon, when all others proved false. A sympathizing friend; but only a friend; not a lover. No, no, never that!

And now he was dying! This good friend, this brother! For the ceremony made no difference, only a few words said to please a dying man. Her good brother! her dear brother! Her tears fell fast upon his wasted face, as she knelt, with her cheek close to his; and he, while his voice died away in faint whispers, and fainter, till it was silent. "Till the close clasp about her hands relaxed, and she thought he was dead."

But he was not dead; he was only sleeping. A day passed, while this strange slumber lasted; the doctors came, and shook their heads, and said he would never awake again; but they were all mistaken. Then came a time, when he roused out of his stupor, when he said to her:

"Ethel, sweet one, I am going to live—and what then?"

Said it, with his large, troubled eyes full of wisdom, and care, and sorrow. And she listened, with her face hidden in her hands, in an agony of bewilderment and self-pity. A while ago, the thought of his dying had seemed to leave the great world empty and desolate. But, a wife, yet not a wife! To be bound by the law, while her young heart was aching for freedom! What should she do? What could she do?

But one thing was plain to her. She must say nothing to excite him, while his life hung thus upon a thread. And when he said again to her, in his faint voice, "Well, what then, Ethel? What then?" She served her voice to say, "You mustn't talk any more, now, Paul; when you are stronger, then we will talk of anything you wish."

But it was long weeks before they spoke of this again, for he had a second relapse, that brought him down, still nearer, to the grave.

And Ethel watched over him, faithfully, day after day. If he had been, indeed, the husband of her young heart's choice, she could not have nursed him more faithfully. The housekeeper, Mrs. Lindsey, shared her labors, as much as Ethel would permit; but she had a habit of falling asleep in her chair, and the bare possibility of Paul's being neglected, in any way—the thought of his wanting anything, needing anything—gave Ethel such agony, as might have taught her what her feelings really were for him, if she had been wise enough to have understood them. But she had not understood her true feelings for him. She thought she loved him only as a dear friend, a brother.

This housekeeper, Mrs. Lindsey, was the widow of a distant relative of Paul Lindsey; and when Ethel's father died, he invited this widow of his cousin, who was in reduced circumstances, to come and live at his handsome country-seat, and make a home, where he could invite his ward, during her vacations. Mrs. Lindsey had been a widow, with one son, at the time of her second marriage, and Gerald Black had now come, for the first time since his mother's marriage, to visit her. He had had some appointment that had kept him abroad.

But he seemed very glad to be in his native land again; very glad to be at rest. He was one of those men who love rest; who love to fold their hands

peacefully over their bosoms, and let the waves of Time bear them on gently. Gerald Black thought Ethel was the loveliest girl he had ever met. Perhaps her sweet, fair, innocent face was a welcome contrast to his own dark, haughty, and rather imperious countenance. He thought, also, what a fine thing it would be, if he could have control of her wealth; for he thought she was very wealthy. Why, it would make it entirely unnecessary for him to work another day; and Gerald Black had a strong, constitutional aversion to labor. He would never be a bold, active villain. His badness would always show in a cowardly, deceitful manner. He was not at all energetic, even in wickedness; he was too lazy to even make a thorough scamp. But he tried to ingratiate himself in Ethel's favor in every way he could, consistently with his natural constitution.

He flattered her, in a certain way, persistent way, that, at first, was rather disagreeable to her; then, what proved more successful, he appealed to her pity. He had been unfortunate all his life; fate had been against him; an evil star had shone upon his birth. And, finally, in the long days, when Paul was out of danger, and coming slowly back to life again, Ethel got accustomed to his manderings, and, at last, began to feel pity for the man who had been so baffled and ill-used.

The next thing he tried, was to render her still more wretched, by dwelling upon the sacrifice she had made, in wedding Paul. She was wretched enough, as it was, concerning it. What should she do? What could she do? This was the burden of her thoughts, day and night, night and day. She loved her freedom—she had not thought of being married to anyone—least of all, to Paul. And feeling, as she did, such a strong affection and respect for him, made it, she said to herself, worse for her. If she disliked him, she could leave him without any compunction.

It was four weeks before Paul spoke to Ethel, again, about his future; for she avoided being alone with him, all she possibly could.

But one soft, bright, summer day, just at sunset, she entered the room, bringing the fresh, sweet breath of roses and lilacs with her; for she came in through the low French window—his room was on the ground floor, and opened into an old fashioned flower-garden—she had her hands full of roses and lilacs, as she entered.

He looked up to her, his face lighting up, as if always did at her approach, thinking, what indeed was the truth, that the flowers were not half so sweet as his face. She thought Mrs. Lindsey was in the room—she usually was at this hour. But she had gone out, and Ethel stood, hesitatingly, for a moment; but Paul held out his hand so beseechingly, that she went forward, and laid the flowers down, by his face, on the pillow. He took her hand, silently, in both his own.

"Look at your flowers, Paul. See how fresh and sweet they are. You will soon be better, so you can go out and gather them for yourself. Are they not sweet?"

"Yes," still holding her hand, still looking up in her face—"yes."

"Shall I read to you, Paul?"

"No; sit down, here, close by my side, so I can look at you."

She obeyed him, silently, and he looked up in the sweet face, so near to his, yet that, he felt in his soul, was so far from him, till tears rose and hid her face from him. He raised her delicate hand to his lips, and then laid it over his eyes. Suddenly, he looked up in her face, her sweet, woeful eyes. "Ethel, I was selfish, I was mad, to do as I did. But, before God, my darling, I thought I was leaving you, forever; and I loved you so, and—and—there was another reason, that I thought was a strong and good one. But I fear my own mad, selfish love tempted me, instead of honor. There were other ways—"

He paused, hesitated, and then went on:

"Your sad eyes have almost killed me, ever since. But, hear me, Ethel; trust me, sweet, as you always have. I claim nothing. You are free as you ever were. I claim no right, only the right to watch over you, protect you. Until I can win your love, if such bliss can ever be for me."

Her sweet face changed from red to white, and then to red again, as he talked. But, again, she silenced him, by saying he was too weak to talk. When he got stronger, they would speak again of their future.

But Gerald—he talked. He read poetry to her by the hour, invariably selecting those poems in which dashing, haughty heroes, ill-used by fortune, got the victory at last, and carried off the lady of their love. His dark, laughing eyes always pointed the moral of the poem, and Ethel felt herself to be the heroine. She grew accustomed to it; to feeling herself in a perfumed, intoxicating atmosphere of adulation and homage; and it is to be wondered at that it grew to be rather delightful, than otherwise? To see this haughty hero, although he never assumed the attitude physically, yet forever giving her the impression that he was on his knees to her; that his rap, poetical sense was bending in adoration at her shrine?

And Paul? Paul saw it all, felt that Ethel was slipping still further from him. But, what right had he to speak, to fetter her still more to his will? He instinctively disliked and distrusted Gerald; but he felt that it would be impossible to him to speak to Ethel of his suspicions, of his want of faith in

him. So the weary days rolled by, and Paul did not get stronger. And the good doctor changed his medicine daily, patiently preparing new pills and powders, and sighed in spirit to think there was no greater change for the better in his patient. If the good doctor had only known, it was a little heart-food, a little sunshine of the soul, that Paul needed, instead of drugs.

And at this very time, Mrs. Lindsey—and he had some respect for her judgment—began to hint to him how wretched Ethel was; and, though he could scarcely tell how she gave the impression, for she certainly did not put it in plain words, yet the impression she certainly did, that Ethel desired a separation, and that it was only justice to her that she should have it. And, in the same way, she gave him the idea that Ethel loved her son.

Poor Paul, he did not know what to do—what he ought to do. He said to himself, that, if he respected and trusted Gerald Black, he would remove all barriers between him and Ethel; he would give her to him, though his own heart broke. But, feeling toward him as he did, his course was not clear; he was her guardian, too, and she was more dependent on his guardianship than she knew. For, while she thought and everyone thought, she was the heiress of a handsome property, she was, in fact, absolutely penniless; for the bank in which her funds were placed by her father, had failed, soon after her father's death. Paul had kept the knowledge from her, judging, rightly, that she would refuse to accept so much from his hands. This was, together with his great love, that had influenced him in wishing her to become his wife, when he thought he was leaving her forever. He had left her all his wealth, by will; but he had some distant relatives, who, although wealthy, were unscrupulous, and destitute of right principle, and he feared that they might make her trouble. He felt that she would be more absolutely certain of inheriting his large fortune, if he left her his widow.

What to do, to do right by Ethel—this was the burden of his thought, day and night. And, poor fellow, he was very weak yet; weakened by his almost mortal illness, and weakened, still more, by sorrow and hope deferred. He felt that he could not decide—he must have time to think; and so, when the doctor decided that a short sea-voyage, a trip to Cuba, was imperatively necessary in his case, he caught at the suggestion. He would go away, entirely away, from the sweet temptation that was luring him, may be, from the path of honor; he would go and think it over, calmly; and when he returned he would decide. But how faced Ethel, in the days that followed Paul's absence? Did she experience a sense of relief, when the man, who so suddenly and unexpectedly was forced upon her acceptance as a husband, was out of her sight? When there was no loving, patient eyes to follow her, as she listened to the gallant compliments of the ideal man?

Why, no; as the days went by, each one seeming longer, more tedious, than the last, the compliments of Gerald Black seemed coarse, his admiration offensive, presuming; she grew weary of his conversation, his presence. And there was a dreary void in her heart, a constant longing for the dear friend, who had always been so great a part of her life; she missed him every day, every hour. Could it be, she said to herself, that she had been deceived in regard to her own feelings? Could it be, that she loved him, not with calm, sisterly affection, but with the love that was nearer and stronger?

But still, the rumor went abroad, possibly from Mrs. Lindsey, though it would be difficult to find the person to whom she told it; still, the impression went abroad, that Ethel had parted from her husband, and was only waiting for time, to obtain a legal separation. On hearing this rumor, an old lawyer friend, who had always done the business of the family, went to visit Ethel. He was a warm friend of Paul's, a friend of her father's, as well as her own. He thought she was wrecking her happiness. So the kind-hearted old gentleman, in order to influence her for her own good, revealed to her a profound secret. He told her, that, instead of an heiress, she had absolutely nothing. And said he:

"One reason why Paul was so anxious to marry you, was, so he could be absolutely sure that you would inherit his large fortune. He had willed it to you; but he thought it would be still surer, if you were his wife. A nobler soul never lived than Paul Lindsey."

Noble, indeed! She went down at once into the valley of humiliation. So he married her out of pity! And, instead of being the heiress, independent, and secure from all possible want, she was absolutely dependent, and had been for years, upon the bounty of the man, whom she had so hastily wed. But her thoughts were all confused, and running together—she could hardly hear the lawyer's last words, her head reeled, and she felt so dizzy. In fact, the first symptoms of that terrible fever were upon her, that Paul had almost died with. But she thought, dreamily, how sorry Mrs. Lindsey would be for her. And she was sure, too, of Gerald's sympathy; the heroes of all the romances he had read to her, were faithful unto death, and the more the heroines lost, the deeper grew their love.

So, that night, when Mrs. Lindsey came into her room, with a cup of tea, and a slice of toast, for she had sent down word, that she was too ill to go down into the dining-room, she told

her all: how, instead of being an heiress, she was a poor girl, was absolutely penniless, and had been for years. Mrs. Lindsey was perfectly overwhelmed with astonishment and dismay. She said but little; but her deeds spoke.

The next morning, Ethel was worse. There had been several cases of smallpox in the neighborhood, and the doctor who was at first called in, a young village practitioner, with no overstock of brains, or education, pronounced it a case of smallpox. He did not tell Ethel so, but told Mrs. Lindsey and Gerald. And the consequence was, that within an hour of the time he communicated the knowledge to them, they were on their way to the station. They, each of them, left a letter for Ethel, which she read at once.

Mrs. Lindsey said, she could not think of remaining longer, to be a burden upon her, as she had no means to support even herself; but she should always love her, she would always seem to her like a beloved daughter; but duty seemed to demand, that she should depart at once, etc.

Gerald's letter was more poetic and flowery. He cursed his evil star more bitterly than ever. He denounced his fate—he was wretched, despairing; but his business called him back again to the East at once; he must go. He ended by avowing, that the star of his fate was setting in blackness and gloom. But he knew the good angels would be with her—he knew they would watch over the lot of one so innocent and good.

They, neither of them, mentioned her illness. That was too awkward a subject for them to converse upon gracefully, so they ignored it.

Poor Ethel! She had fallen upon evil days, indeed. Her old nurse stayed with her and was faithful and true, and waited upon her devotedly. But, as the days went on, and she lay burning up with fever and raving with delirium she thought, in the intervals of consciousness, that she sometimes felt upon her burning forehead a softer hand than good aunt Chloe's, a lower, tenderer voice—the tenderest and most loving voice in the whole world soothing her, calling her pet names.

But, when consciousness returned, no one was in the room but aunt Chloe, and her daughter Fanny, the chambermaid. Aunt Chloe was speaking, in a low tone.

"To think that Mrs. Lindsey and her son, after pretending to think so much of Miss Ethel as they did, should run off and leave her, because they thought it was smallpox; so afraid of Josiah's precious lives, just as if it would be a loss—precious little loss it would be to anybody. Never waited to see her, or see if they could do anything to help her—or make any arrangements for her to have any care; they didn't seem to care whether she was left to die, or not, if they only got away."

As Ethel lay, and heard these words, a great tide of remorse and despair swept over her. To think of the utter worthlessness of those who had made such loud professions of attachment, and then to think of the true, tried devotion of the patient heart she had slighted. Oh! to see him once more—only to see him, to ask him to forgive her; to tell him that she loved him, now—had always loved him, only her weak heart had been led away by a slight fancy.

But he was far away from her; and in a distant land was learning to forget her, nay, to despise her. She would never see him again; or, if she did, he would have ceased to love her; he would regard her with indifference, as a stranger.

Tears, which she was too weak to wipe away, rose to her eyes, and slid silently down her white, wasted cheeks. And now, aunt Chloe and Fanny, thinking she was asleep, went down to

This image shows a vertical strip of aged, cracked, and torn paper, likely a book cover or endpaper. The paper is light-colored with a mottled texture and numerous small dark spots. It is heavily damaged, with significant cracking and tearing along the right edge, revealing a darker, possibly black, material underneath. The left edge is also irregular and worn. The overall appearance is that of an old, fragile object.